



Indigenous Education Report January 2025

Submitted to the Superintendent by Beverly Azak,
District Vice Principal, Indigenous Education

Indigenous Support Workers

The Indigenous Education Department provided a coaching session for the Indigenous Support Workers (ISWs) on November 28. The ISWs received a review in logging data into a student service log for Indigenous learners either for an individual learner or a group service entry. The ISWs also had a session of participating in Literacy games.

The ISWs participated in an In-Service Session on January 24 for the University of Florida Literacy Institute (UFLI) training that measures the acquisition of early literacy skills from kindergarten to grade 6.



Indigenous Support Worker, Kelsey Carlow supported learners during a performance held at Nechako Elementary School in Kitimat.



Bear Valley School Students Made Devil's Club Salve

Students at Bear Valley made Wa'ums Haldaakws, Devil's Club salve with Science Teacher, Eric Drew. They applied for authorization and received permission from Nisga'a Lisims Government to use the Nisga'a language for the Devil's Club medicine label on the salve container, demonstrating respect for cultural practices and appropriate language use.

FNESC Conference 2024

The 2024 First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) Education Conference was held December 12 to 14 in Vancouver. CMSD82 representatives who attended the conference included the District Vice Principal, Indigenous Education, Gitxsanimx Immersion Teacher, Indigenous Education District Teacher Mentor, and Mount Elizabeth Middle/Secondary School Principal. The event was a great opportunity to access other knowledge, network and share. FNESC's goal is to increase the capacity of all those in the education system to make transformative changes in First Nations education. The conference theme this year was *Connecting to Our Land*.

The workshops highlighted how First Nations deep connections to the land serve as the foundation for many aspects of learning and education. The conference events and workshops delved into language learning, ecological education, and on-the-land experiences, showcasing the initiatives offered by both First Nations schools and District schools. We thank those who attended from the District and shared their knowledge, insights, and experiences, which greatly enhance our collective efforts and enrich the important work we do together.



Illustrations of First Nations connections to the land presented during the FNESC Conference 2024 from the Suwilaay'msam Laxyuup, Suwilaakws, Lakwalaams School Academy.

Indigenous Education Report – January 2025 *(cont'd)*

Update from the Superintendent

The Director of Instruction for Indigenous Education position has been re-advertised, and we remain hopeful that this critical role will be filled. The staffing process will begin following the position's closing date, which is January 31, 2025. Those interested can find the advertisement and further details on the Coast Mountains School District website at <https://cmsd.bc.ca/jobs/administrative>.

The District is actively advancing its efforts to establish an Indigenous Education Council, in collaboration with the Board of Education, the Superintendent's Office, the Finance Department and the Inter-Tribal Education Committee (ITEC). This initiative aligns with the Ministry of Education and Child Care's directive under Bill 40, the *School Amendment Act, 2023*, which mandates the creation of Indigenous Education Councils within school districts.

We are grateful to all participants contributing to this important work. Special recognition is extended to Lindsay Harder, Executive Assistant to the Secretary Treasurer & Indigenous Education Council, for her hard work, thorough research, meticulous record-keeping, and support in coordinating efforts as we move through this process.

Respectfully submitted,

Beverly Azak
District Vice Principal, Indigenous Education

Coast Mountains School District is in service to diverse First Nations, Métis and Inuit learners and their caregivers who live, learn and play on the traditional lands of the Gitksan, Haisla, Nisga'a and Ts'msyen peoples.

